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Managing halal quality in food service industry

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MANAGING *HALAL* QUALITY IN FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY

by

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PART ONE

Introduction

The Muslim world population survey conducted in 2005 found that Islam is the fastest growing religion on earth, both through birth and adoption. There were 2 billion Muslims scatted around 148 countries and the figures are rising each day. It is estimated that by 2010, the Muslim population will exceed 3 billion (Evans, 2005). The recorded growth rate for Muslim population is as follows: the Europe Muslim population of around 25 million increased at a rate of 140% over the past 10 years, America's by 25%, Australia's by 250% and Asia's increased by 12% over the same period. The healthy growth rate among Muslim population represents an increasing demand for *halal* products in the market. The definition of *halal* is included in glossary. Global food investors are now shifting their attention to *halal* food production and delivery to gain a greater market share in the *halal* industry.

Previous studies completed by scholars concentrated on issues among the consumers and traders, perceptions of *halal* definitions and certifications on *halal* food products. Actual *halal* practice within the food industry has rarely been discussed.

Purpose

This study was designed to explore the actual *halal* food practices in the food industry to learn to what extent the existing *halal* food producers and providers manage their work place under the requirement of Malaysian Standard MS1500: 2004 that is included in appendix A. The findings of this study would serve as reference for potential *halal* food investors and develop a foundation for food producers and providers to improve on their current practices.

Statement of Objective

This study begins with exploring the definitions of *halal* from various professionals who are engaging in food manufacturing, education and production, the public and Islamic Development of Malaysia (JAKIM). JAKIM definition is used as a benchmark against the professional and public opinions to find out whether industry opinions are in line with the (accepted) JAKIM definition. The role of JAKIM can be found in the glossary.

Current practices of *halal* food producers and providers will be included in the main body of the paper followed by MS1500: 2004 standard comparisons to current practice. In conclusion, a summary of the findings and recommendations for current *halal* producers and providers will be discussed.

Justification

The significance of the study provides descriptions of *halal* food practices that are currently implemented and acceptable among Muslim consumers. The majority of Muslims relate the certified *halal* logo to *halal* products. The *halal* logo gives confidence to consumers, its absence means that Muslims would think twice about buying a product (Fariza, 2007). Mohamed (1998) stated in the Islamic conference that "Muslim traders and consumers are confident that the product is *halal* by knowing the processing of the product is under Islamic supervision and seeing a *halal* logo on the product." Nordin (2003) did a research on 263 local Muslims to find out the influence of *halal* logo in their buying decision. Out of 263 samples, 158 strongly agreed with the statement "I place importance on products with *halal* logo" (p.326). Only 2 strongly disagreed with the statement.

JAKIM plays an important role in Malaysian Muslim social behavior. The Muslims trust that the *halal* certification issued by JAKIM is an indicator of *halal* quality. They would

purchase products with the JAKIM *halal* logo. According to Nordin's (2003) survey on 263 local Muslims, 139 strongly agreed that "the *halal* labeling under JAKIM is according to s*yarak* and is a genuine *halal* trademark" (p.326). The definition of *syarak* is included in the glossary Only 2 strongly disagreed with the statement.

JAKIMs MS1500:2004 standard is used as a benchmark in this study because it is recognized locally and internationally especially among countries under the Organization of Islamic Councils. Moreover it has been accepted by the United Nations due to its stringent criteria employed (Hayati, 2004).

The study will be presented based on collective seminar papers on food production companies namely Nestle, Ayamas, McDonald's, MAS Catering, and Coffee Bean Tea Leaf; personal visits and interviews to High 5 bread town, JAKIM (the local *halal* certification center) and local food operators.

Constraints

Halal practices are perceived as a sensitive issue among food producers and operators as there are many variations on the *halal* definitions. Moreover, information search for practicing *halal* in the food industry is somewhat challenging because organizations are reluctant to share in depth information on how they perform *halal* practices in the organization and there is no historical data from scholars to refer upon. Nevertheless, constraints could be overcome by networking with collective food producers and food operators, performing personal visits to the *halal* premises to put together the missing pieces of the overall picture.

Glossary

Ayamas: poultry processing plant that supplies whole chickens, cut chicken parts and further processed chicken to both the domestic and export markets ("Ayamas", 2006).

Bain Marrie: counter top equipment that is used to keep food warm

Food Premise: a building or a place for food and beverage businesses such as restaurants, food courts , commercial kitchens, cafeterias, cake and pastry shops, fast food restaurants, canteens, clubs/hotels/ kiosks and canteens ("JAKIM", 2007).

Halal: a Quranic term which means permitted, allowed, authorized, approved, sanctioned or lawful ("Definitions", 2007).

Haram: a Quranic term meaning prohibited and unlawful by Allah; food and drinks that are forbidden for every Muslim ("Definitions", 2007)

Halal Certification: certification recognizing that the products are permitted under Islamic law. These products are thus edible, drinkable or usable by Muslims. ("Jakim", 2007)

Halal Slaughtering: slaughtering in accordance to strict Islamic law and guideline which involves the process of killing the animal quickly with a sharp knife while the name of Allah is invoked (Zukifli, 2005)

Hygiene: includes various aspects of personal hygiene, clothing, equipment and the premises used for processing or manufacturing of food (Husnah, 2007).

HACCP: a quality assurance program that focuses attention on the safety and quality of food products during processing and handling. ('Ayamas", 2006)

JAKIM: Islamic body responsible to inspect and issue *halal* certificates to food operators ("Application", 2007).

KFC: famous quick service restaurant that sells fried poultry as its signature dish.

MAS: Major Malaysian airline operator

Nestle: a multinational packaged food company

Najis: dogs and pigs, including liquids or discharge from these animals, carcasses except fish and grasshoppers, animals which are considered repulsive such as lice, flies and rates, animals with fangs such as tigers, lions, bears and other similar animals, birds of prey, poisonous animals, amphibians, all types of sold by-products of digestion, urine, placenta and blood except the heart and liver and all types of drink or beverages that can cause intoxication (Husna, 2007).

Putrajaya: a newly developed city in Malaysia

Syariah: a complete Law and System to protect Islam and its adherents ("what", 2007).

Syarak: a form of Islamic law to guide Muslim behavior and conduct. ("Definitions", 2007).

Setting: placing dishes in the container according to standard recipe (Abdul, 1998).

Tayyib: lawful and wholesome (Remi, 2005).

Temperature Checker: a person who checks the temperature constantly to ensure the temperature is at the desirable level.

PART TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

The following will continue the concepts of *halal* by defining the meaning of *halal* among professionals, discussing the role of JAKIM, *halal* definition in JAKIM context, importance of JAKIM certification and end with criteria for *halal* certificate application.

Halal definitions among professionals

The concept of *halal* came from the verse Quaran al-Baqarah: 168

"Oh Mankind! Eat from the earth which is *halal* and *tayyib* and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Lo! He is an open enemy for you".

The *halal* concept serves as a guideline for Muslims in all aspects of consumerism and consumption of products and services (Burhan, 2000). Bound by the Islamic dietary laws, Muslims would check and judge the permissibility and prohibitive nature of all foods and drinks before consumption to prevent them from consuming forbidden and doubtful products (Mohamed, 2001). Muslims derive good and *halal* food in many ways.

Ahmad (2005) defined *halal* as "*halal* is not only in terms of religion but it is also about cleanliness and purity." Commercial *halal* food stall owners view cleanliness of the food premises and food purchased from reputable *halal* butchers as key elements of *halal* food (Husna, 2007). Food manufacturer, Lim Siow Jin, well known as the king of herbs considers *halal* as no animal part or alcohol used in the production (Fariza, 2007).
Jamil, Associate Professor of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)'s *halal* product research institute defines *halal* as food that fulfills the religious requirements and the scientific and hygienic" (Zulkifli, 2007). Nordin (2007) gathered 263 members from consumer associations

in major states in Malaysia, 221 members refer to *halal* food as food not "*haram*", clean and pure from "*najis*", not using equipment that ever produced *haram* food, and *halal* food ingredients must not be mixed or even come into contact with *haram* materials (Nordin, 2007). Wahab, a commmpercial food caterer states that he takes into consideration factors of food safety and hygiene (Ahmad, 2004). Mohammed representing the Muslim traders and consumers viewed *halal* as ingredients and additives such as emulsifiers and flavorings to be free of pork and alcohol (Haj, 1998). Yaakob Che Man, the food operator stated *halal* as "food ingredients free of lard and pork". The general opinions from professionals on *halal* food place great emphasize on cleanliness, purity, safety and in harmony with religious requirements.

The role of JAKIM

JAKIM is appointed by the government to issue *halal* certificates to new applicants or applicants who wish to renew their *halal* licenses. JAKIM has identified and accredited several overseas Islamic organisations that are actively involved in the certification of *halal* products exported to Malaysia.

In addition, JAKIM has been commissioned to study documents submitted by the applicants and inspect products and manufacturing premises to ensure the *halal* quality is in line with JAKIM requirements. JAKIM also frequently educates the public on *halal* practices by conducting public seminars every month.

Halal definition by JAKIM

Zamali (2006) found the following:

Halal is a description of things or actions permitted by *Shariah* law without punishment imposed on the doer. *Halal* food means food permitted under the *Shariah* law and fulfils the following conditions:

1. Does not contain any parts or products of animals that are non-halal to Muslims or products of animals which are not slaughtered according to *Shariah* law
2. Does not contain any ingredients that are *najis* according to *Shariah* law
3. Safe and not harmful
4. Has not been prepared, processed or manufactured using equipment that is contaminated with things that are *najis* according to *Shariah* law
5. The food or its ingredients do not contain any human parts or its derivatives that are not permitted by *Shariah* law
6. During its preparation, processing, packaging, storage or transportation, the food is physically separated from any other food that does not meet the requirements stated above, or any other things that have been decreed as *najis* by *Shariah* law. (p. 2)

As Zamali (2006, ¶ 1) suggested "from the above *halal* definition, it is clear that JAKIMs *halal requirements* recognize safety and quality assurance**.** The final *halal* products must be clean, safe, well taken care of, with good presentation, served in a proper manner and of quality for everybody.

When comparing the general opinions of the professionals and JAKIM, it is observed that professionals and JAKIM share similar views of the definition of *halal* food that it must be clean and safe to consume according to Islamic law.

Expanding from that idea that food must be clean and safe to consumers according to Islamic law, JAKIM further clarifies that *halal* encircles all aspects of cleanliness, safety, preparation, storage and purification. This give rise to MS: 1500: 2004. Some aspects of MS: 1500: 2004 is included in appendix A.

Halal certification

JAKIM is given the authority to issue *halal* certificates. JAKIM would ensure all requirements stipulated under the MS 1500:2004 *halal* standards to be fulfilled before any h*alal* product be awarded a *halal* certificate.

Once *halal* certificates are awarded, manufacturers can use the *halal* label on their products. The *halal* label issued by JAKIM is a registered trade mark under Trade Mark Act 1975. Products with *halal* certification must conform fully to *halal* standards.

JAKIM carries out *halal* conformity inspections through regular monitoring either through spot checks or inspections or verbal communication with the companies involved. During the post certification period, any changes discovered without prior approval from JAKIM will result in the certificate being suspended or revoked. These changes may be classified as minor, major or serious offences:

1. Minor – involving hygiene and cleanliness

2. Major – involving the change of ingredients, manufacturers and suppliers, machinery and relocation of the plant.

The above offences (minor and major) will render the certificate to be suspended and subjected to remedial and corrective actions by the manufacturer and require resubmission of application.

3. Serious – involving the use of *non-halal* ingredients e.g. *non-halal* slaughtered

animals, pork or its derivatives in the production. This will cause the certificate to be revoked and the company to be prosecuted in court.

A *halal* certificate is valid for two years. The renewal of the certificate is not automatic. Before renewal is granted, the products will undergo a thorough inspection process, similar to the one when the first application was made. As *halal* certification is not mandatory, but those with *halal* certification have a competitive advantage over other food manufacturers. (Zamali, 2006)

Criteria to be fulfilled for halal certificate application

The first step to venturing into the *halal* business is to apply for a *halal* license through JAKIM. The application for *halal* license can be done at JAKIM's office in Putrajaya or applicants can obtain information about the application process from JAKIM from their web site http:// www.halaljakim.gov.my. The following are general requirements from JAKIM when companies applying for *halal* license. The specific requirements for food premise, manufacturer and abattoir are added in appendix B. ("JAKIM", 2007)

1. Every food manufacturer or food premise or abattoir must only produce or manufacture or sell *halal* products.

   To ensure the *halal* requirements are fulfilled, JAKIM will perform visits to local and overseas food premises and abattoirs before issuing *halal* certification to the respective organizations. If there is a local Islamic organization recognized by JAKIM, JAKIM will rely on that organization to perform the investigation and issuing of the *halal* certificate to the respective overseas applicants.

2. Every food manufacturer must ensure that sources of ingredients are *halal* and deal with suppliers which supply *halal* materials or the suppliers are *halal* certificate holders. JAKIM requires a list of ingredients to be submitted to JAKIM before JAKIM issues the *halal* certificate to the food manufacturer or provider.
3. Every company must abide by the procedures in all aspects as spelt out in the procedures manual.
4. Those companies which are classified under multinational and Small and Medium industry must form an internal *Halal* Audit Committee and
   appoint one Islamic Affairs executive (Islamic studies) to handle and ensure the compliance of *halal* certification procedures.
5. There must be two full time Muslim, Malaysian citizen workers employed in the kitchen handling or processing of food.
6. During the preparation, handling, processing, packaging or transporting of the product, the product must be clean and free from any *non halal*
   ingredient.
   JAKIM will perform inspections in any reasonable time without giving notice to the *halal* food operators to check on the operating premises.
7. Apparatus and facilities on the premises must be clean and free from being contaminated by substances considered as *najis* (filthy) or harmful to health. JAKIM will ensure that there are no dogs or pigs inside and outside of the premises.

8. The company must stress the cleanliness of tools, transportation, production area and surrounding area in line with Good Manufacturing Practice. - All workers are required to practice the code of ethics and good hygiene.

Conclusion to Literature Review

From the above findings, there are various views about such as " it is not only in terms of religion but it is also about cleanliness and purity", "cleanliness of the food premises and food purchased from reputable *halal* butchers", "no animal part or alcohol used in the production" and "food that fulfills the religious requirements and the scientific and hygienic" on *halal* definitions among food professionals. The professionals' views are similar to JAKIM definition. This is a good start for *halal* businesses. However questions are raise about the good practices in the *halal* food service industry. The general public is concerned about the quality that receives from the *halal* food provider. For this reason, this study was designed to find out to what extent food operators manage *halal* quality in the industry according to JAKIM. The following paragraphs will concentrate on studying the practices of *halal* in the industry and recommend how to improve on the current practice.

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PART THREE

Introduction

This section will first present several case studies of *halal* food practices found in several organizations namely Nestle, Ayamas, McDonald's, MAS Catering, The Coffee Bean Tea Leaf and numerous interviews with food operators. Comments on the current practices and recommendations of the findings will be discussed later.

Practices in Nestle

Nestle manufactures and markets more than 300 *halal* food products in Malaysia. Nestle Malaysia alone exports about RM470 million worth of products mainly to the Asian and the Middle Eastern markets.

Nestlé is already profiting from their farsightedness in *halal*. With an annual profit turnover approximating USD70 billion and more than 250,000 employees worldwide, Nestlé amassed a net profit of USD 6.07 billion in the financial year ending 2005. The group recorded more than USD3 billion in sales from countries where Islam is practiced, and the number is increasing ("Nestle", 2005).

Nestle committed to *halal* practices before the introduction of the *halal* certification by authorities in the mid 80's. They took the first-mover advantage in 1994 to obtain *halal* certification from the government. Nestle Malaysia was at the forefront to fulfil all local *halal* certification requirements.

Nestle Malaysia gets very strong support from its headquarters in Vevey, Switzerland to commit to *halal*. Such strong support makes their *halal* procedure implementation much easier. Nestle invests approximately RM500,000 a year on *halal* certification costs including

travel expenses for religious officers to inspect its premises both locally and overseas, administrative costs and other incidentals.

Nestle ensures strict *halal* compliance by setting up a special *halal* committee comprising of select senior Muslim executives from all departments such as manufacturing, technology, marketing, legal corporate affairs and regulatory department within the organization to be responsible for all matters pertaining to *halal* certification.

The committees are responsible to advise, monitor and implement *halal* policy. They develop precise procedures to ensure all raw materials, manufacturing processes and supply chain meet *halal* requirements. Nestle's *halal* implementation begins with the development of recipes at the respective research and development centres.

Nestle ensures its suppliers comply with its *halal* needs and provide only *halal* raw materials of high quality. Nestle maintains good working relationships with all relevant authorities to keep updated with new regulations.

In terms of exercising internal *halal* control in the company, Nestle not only carefully selects its local *halal* suppliers but also exercises control on its imports from abroad to make sure all products are *halal* and *halal* certified. Research and development officers in the US, Switzerland and Singapore must commit to source for *halal* compliant raw materials. *Halal* checklists are use to scrutinize all raw materials that they use.

Nestle also implements full control on the production lines, equipment and utensils during the production process to make sure no forbidden products are involved in the production process. The same goes with its storage and transport. In addition, Nestle ensures a high quality of sanitation, hygiene and food safety in its production. Apart from complying with MS: 1500: 2400, Nestle takes the initiative to communicate with its stakeholders on

halal procedures so that everyone is informed and aware of the importance of going *halal.* Nestle provides relevant *halal* updates to its employees to enable them to answer queries on *halal* matters from their family and friends. This act could deter activists from making false claims that Nestle Malaysia is not *halal.*

Nestle Malaysia has undertaken several mentoring programs to develop local small manufacturing enterprises in the food manufacturing industry, offering advice and counsel on good food manufacturing processes. It has trained 1200 small and medium enterprises since the program's inception and one of the modules is about *halal* certification, *halal* cleansing and *halal* methods. The management believes the mentoring programs will provide assistance to the local industry that needs knowledge to build up its *halal* manufacturing practices ("Nestle", 2005).

Moreover, Nestle Malaysia continuously searches for solutions in maximizing the production of goods while at the same time minimizing consumption of resources and reducing waste. This gives credit to Nestlé Malaysia to be recognised in the Nestlé world as the centre of excellence for *halal*.

Ayamas

Ayamas food cooperation was the first company in Malaysia to breed, process and retail *halal* chicken based products. It processes 100,000 birds per day to supply to both local and international markets including Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei, Hong Kong and the Middle East ("Ayamas", 2006).

Ayamas promises its consumers to produce high quality *halal* products that it spends over RM5 million on research and development annually to fulfil its commitment. In

addition, it has ISO 9002 certification and is in the process of obtaining the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points or HACCP as an integral part of quality assurance to the market.

Ayamas guarantees all its products are *halal* because it has 100% control at each and every stage of its processes ranging from breeding, hatching, slaughtering, processing, packaging and distribution. It owns hatcheries to ensure *halal* quality from eggs to chicks, breed chicks in a close air conditioned and contained system that chicks are isolating from *najis* and uses *halal* feed for the entire system. It also owns abattoirs that functions according to JAKIM set standards and processing plant that produces *halal* chicken products.

Moreover Ayamas developed a Syariah Advisory Council consisting of distinguished and prominent religious scholars from Islamic institutions that act as an advisory body to advice it on all *halal* matters relating to its business. It also maintains close relationships with JAKIM to ensure consistency of producing *halal* products. (“Ayamas”, 2006)

McDonald’s

McDonald’s makes careful selection of its *halal* suppliers. To be qualified as a McDonald’s supplier, they must comply with global official standards as well as McDonald’s internal inspection and policies, including product specification, food safety standards and farm bio security policies. They must adhere to social responsibility policies on aspects concerning animal welfare, animal feed as well as prohibition of deforestation, and prohibition on the use of antibiotics as growth promoters on the animals.

McDonald’s conducts an animal welfare due diligence as well as a *halal* due diligence process in selecting its suppliers. The suppliers who have been through the verification process are then assigned a specific number then they are listed in McDonald’s database of approved suppliers, subject to a yearly reinstatement or delisting.

Apart from the criteria listed above, McDonald's creates its own *halal* rules in selecting its meat suppliers. The suppliers are allowing practicing restrainer boxes, to ensure that halal slaughtering is done within a controlled manner. McDonald's only accepts hand slaughtering. Mechanical slaughter is not allowed. Prayer must be pronounced on each individual *halal* animal before it is slaughtered. This act is based on the interpretation of the Quranic verse which reads, "and eat not of that whereon Allah's name hath not been mentioned, for lo! It is abomination.." The Quran: VI – 122

McDonald's *halal* position on animal feed is straight forward – no animal parts are to be fed to their cows. McDonald's only accepts "vegetarian cows" and "vegetarian chicken" to be supplied to McDonald's. It sends its staff for *halal* trainings that are organized by JAKIM to uphold *halal* standards at the work place among the staff.

Halal Practices in Malaysia Airlines (MAS) Catering

MAS Catering caters all the aircraft food on Malaysian Airlines and also some aircrafts from overseas. In terms of *halal* practices, MAS Catering takes careful precautions in handling *halal* food production beginning with the sourcing of raw materials to delivery of food to aircraft. MAS Catering imports 70% of its raw food materials. MAS Catering purchasers study *halal* labels on raw materials before proceeding to procuring it. *Halal* label must be issued by *halal* certifying bodies recognized by JAKIM. When in doubt, the MAS Catering purchaser will consult JAKIM for a second opinion. In addition, the purchaser will investigate the transportation vehicle whether it qualifies the hygienic requirement and contains any *non halal* items. As for the local raw materials, the purchaser will look for the JAKIM certified logo as a purchase guideline (Abdul, 1998).

Upon receipt, MAS Catering practices manual raw material handling. Operation managers ensure food handlers maintain high personal hygiene and hands must be clean and free from unhygienic matters. Equipment and utensils are free from contacting food that is forbidden according to *Syariah*.

Storage of frozen items is at - 20°C and storage of chilled items between 1-5° C. There is a "temperature checker" to ensure the right temperature at all times. Food items are not placed on the floor. Racks with proper ventilation are used. The Receiver will label date of receipt to practice the first in first out (FIFO) system.

In the process of "setting" and packing, food handlers will use disposable gloves when transferring and portioning food into dishes. Maximum time taken for transferring and portioning must not be over 45 minutes to maintain the high quality of food freshness. Dishes are covered with clean aluminum foil or clear plastic after portioning and stored into the chiller.

Dry ice is placed in meal carts to maintain low temperatures before delivering dishes to the aircraft. Meal carts are loaded onto delivery trucks to be sent to the aircraft within half and hour after dishes have been taken out from chiller.

Transport for delivery of food to aircraft must be hygienic and not used for other purposes especially transporting *non halal* items. The vehicle is washed once a day to maintain cleanliness.

In addition to upholding *halal* standards through practice, MAS Catering implements some of their own policies to maintain its *halal* status. The purchaser must regularly update the list of suppliers and new raw materials, work closely with JAKIM to avoid any discrepancies in purchasing *halal* raw materials, hire a full time halal inspector to prevent

any discrepancies arising from *halal* practice. MAS Catering develops *halal* awareness program to educate food handlers on *halal* food handling. The notice of *halal* food processing is placed at noticeable areas to remind the handlers of what need to be done.

Coffee Bean Tea Leaf

Coffee Bean Tea Leaf is a food operation that sells coffee and snacks to the consumer. It purchases meat products and ingredients from certified *halal* suppliers. On the production line, the plates used must be of a certain approved material by JAKIM. The management pays close attention to staff grooming and hygiene from head to toe. Staff must be well groomed all the times. Seventy percent of the Coffee Bean staff is Muslim (“Coffee”, 2004).

Interview with Azriza Asahari (restaurant operator)

Azriza operates a 1000 sq halal restaurant near a busy shopping centre. She said “my application of *halal* license was smooth, perhaps being a Malay gives me the advantage of easy approval.” “I manage the restaurant by ensuring a high standard of hygiene and food safety. The JAKIM inspector came on the first day of our operation to check. They looked into the staff uniform too. I showed them to the production line. They approved the clean condition and issued the license. I continue my *halal* business by ensuring a high standard of hygiene on food and work premises and purchase food ingredients from reliable halal food supplier.” A. Asahari (personal communication, November 30, 2007)

Interview with Shamsuddin Chia (supplier of imported Australian Beef)

“The government made it compulsory to import *halal* meat. To import my Australian product to Malaysia, I needed to apply through JAKIM and arrange to take JAKIM on for trips to visit farms and abattoirs in Australia to inspect the actual cattle farming and

slaughtering process. Once JAKIM is satisfied with the condition, JAKIM will issue the *halal* certificate to me." S. Chia (personal communication, November 20, 2007)

Interview with Dedi Ali Asar (Coffee house manager of Dynasty hotel)

"We applied for one of our outlets to be *halal*. To maintain *halal* standard at the outlet and to avoid *halal* and *non halal* food contamination, we built a separate stewarding section from the *non halal* kitchen. We allocated separate sets of cutlery and crockery to be used at the *halal* outlet solely. We use brushes and small equipment that are free from pork. Our *halal* restaurant is situated on the ground floor and our *non halal* restaurants are on the first floor. Eighty percent of our food handlers at the *halal* restaurant are Muslim. We purchase *halal* food products from *halal* suppliers only. No alcohol is to be brought to the restaurant" D.A. Asar (personal communication, November 5, 2007)

Interview with Abu Bakar B. Rahman (Representative of JAKIM)

"The challenge for JAKIM came from the drawbacks about some current factories or food operators that have a *halal* license but do not practice the JAKIM standards fully. It was good at the beginning but once the licenses were issued, *halal* control was loosening. We are still finding ways to educate people on the importance of *halal*. Many people assume *halal* means not selling forbidden meat but *halal* means more than that. It is a holistic concept that comprises of the complete concept of total quality management beginning from sourcing to delivery. There is no hotel in Malaysia that has obtained full JAKIM license. We grant licenses for *halal* kitchens only. It is hard for a hotel to stop selling alcohol on the premises." A.B. B. Rahman (personal communication, November 12)

Personal visit to Silver Bird

Silver Bird was awarded the Food Safety Management System Standard, ISO 22000:500 in 2007. From observation, Silver Bird maintains a high quality of hygiene in bread production. Visitors can view the bread making process from the special seal sky walk above the bread production. There is no direct contact of the visitors with the production. Majority of the workers are Muslim. Machines and floor at the production area are sparkling clean and shinny. There are two quality control checkers; metal detectors and a floor supervisor to ensure bread is safe to consume at all times.

Personal visits to local halal operators

From observation, some popular *halal* food stalls displayed their food for more than 10 hours on *bain marrie* without covers. The shops open 24 hours daily. When there was a food order, the server dished food out from the *bain marrie* at once without heating it up in cooking equipment. The floor is always slick and slippery from spilt oil cans, the smell of toilets fuse to the dining area. In addition, there was no *halal* logo displayed at the stalls.

Case study findings

Nestle, Ayamas and Silver Bird meet the major *halal* criteria set by JAKIM. Netsle, Ayamas adopt controlled purchasing system to ensure raw materials are procuring from genuine *halal* suppliers. Hygiene practices are implementing inside and outside the processing plant. Equipment used are free from *najis*. Each company developed a*halal* committee to ensure *halal* standards are conformed. Companies hired at least two full time Muslim Malaysian citizen workers working at any shift.

Apart from complying with JAKIM standards, Nestle's top management invests RM500, 000 a year on *halal* certification cost that will facilitates implementation of *halal* procedures within at the organization. Nestle also takes the initiatives to communicate with

its stakeholders on its *halal* procedures that *halal* messages are communicate inside and outside the organization.

Ayamas ensures 100% *halal* control on each and every stage of its processes that it owns hatchery, breeding place, abattoirs and processing plant. It has ISO 9002 to give its market the assurance of quality.

Silver Bird was awarded Food Safety Management System Standard, ISO 22000:500 in 2007. The award serves as evidence of assurance to the public that Silver Bird provides quality assured products to the public ("Silver", 2007). The bread making process is available for public viewing so that public can view the production process from a sealed skywalk. From observation, the workers were wearing disposable gloves during bread packaging process to ensure the process continues in good sanitation condition. Floor supervisors checked on every package making sure that *halal* information was printed clearly on the bread cover.

Food operators are given slightly different requirements. Under JAKIM standards, operators must purchase from suppliers that have *halal* certificate from JAKIM or a JAKIM recognized Islamic Body. Sale of alcohol is prohibited, tools and appliances must be cleaned every time before and after they are being used and they can only be used for *halal* cooking, every worker is encouraged to undergo food serving and *halal* training.

The majority of food operators comply with JAKIM standards and a few operators take extra measures to ensure *halal* standards are practiced and implement consistently at work place. MAS Catering only purchases raw materials that are certified *halal* by JAKIM or JAKIM recognized Islamic body, operations managers ensures food handlers maintain high personal hygiene at work at all times, equipment and utensils are clean and are free from

contacting food that is forbidden according to *Syariah*. The operator takes additional steps to ensure that the transportation vehicle is washed once a day to maintain cleanliness.

McDonald’s makes careful selection of its *halal* suppliers. It emphasizes *halal* slaughtering to ensure prayers to be pronounced on each individual animal before they are slaughtered and it also takes into considerations of *halal* feed and requires only vegetarian cows and vegetarian chicken. McDonald’s is believer of training that it regularly sends food handlers to attend *halal* trainings by JAKIM.

Apart from purchasing raw materials from *halal* suppliers, Coffee Bean Tea Leaf pays close attention to staff grooming to ensure staff must be well groomed all the time. Two or more Malaysian Muslims are working on every shift.

Conversely, other local operators comply with JAKIM minimum requirement but show no efforts in improving further. “I continue my *halal* business by ensuring high standard of hygiene on work premises and purchase food ingredients from reliable *halal* food supplier”. A.Asahari (personal communication, November 30, 2007)

Aseana Coffee House of Dynasty hotel food outlet abides by the JAKIM *halal* standards by scheduling three full time Muslim cooks in the kitchen at all times, prepares *halal* products only in the kitchen, had a separate stewarding section built in the *halal* kitchen to separate it from the *non- halal* kitchen to prevent cutleries and crockery from *najis* contamination, staff who are on duty are not allowed to enter both *halal* and *non halal* kitchen, wine and any item of the same kind are strictly prohibited from entering the *halal* kitchen.

Conclusion

TheGeneral public knows the meaning of *halal* but are ignorant of the application of *halal* and the importance of *halal* in their lives. The Representative of JAKIM stated in his conversation that "many people assume *halal* means not selling forbidden meat". A.B.B. Rahman (personnel communication, November 12). The general assumption of no pork and alcohol is *halal* leads to many food operators fail to abide by JAKIM standards that take into consideration total quality management in food production. The public fails to understand that when *halal* food is not prepared and served under a safe and hygienic environment, the food is no longer *halal*. This misunderstanding has given rise to many local *halal* food operators serving non *halal* food to consumers without knowing.

MS: 1500: 2004 is closely observed by selected food manufacturers such as Nestle, Ayamas and Silver Bird; food operators MAS Catering and McDonald's. Many operators are still unclear about the significance of practicing MS:1500: 2004. JAKIM may need to look for more ways to educate the public on MS: 1500: 2004 so that the public will understand and know how to distinguish well prepared *halal* and ill prepared *halal* products. It is important for the public to know how to demand high quality *halal* products that will push the operators to be on their toe to provide high quality *halal* product.

Recommendations

JAKIM plays an important role in improving current *halal* practices. As mentioned above *halal* food operators are new to the standard and need constant guidance from JAKIM

JAKIM may face many challenges to give the right *halal* education to non Muslims operators who are not receptive to the *halal* concept and Muslims who engage into *halal*

business for a long time. However difficult it is for JAKIM to implement the standard but it should not give up on reinforcing the standard because the standard benefits all.

JAKIM should not only conduct seminars to adults occasionally but to school children as well. Thus children will be exposed to the concept earlier and they will encourage their parents to learn about *halal.* In addition, extend invitations to college students to learn about *halal* practices whenever there is *halal* training.

Despite suspending or revoking *halal* certificates for operators that fail to follow *halal* standards, JAKIM may implement a penalty as well as suspending *halal* certificates for operators that do not follow *halal* standards. The penalty on operators ranges from RM 10,000 to RM 50,000. The existing JAKIM rules are to suspend operators' license if they fail to comply with the *halal* standards. It is suggested for JAKIM to increase the degree of penalty by imposing the monetary fine into the penalty system thus, the MS 1500:2004 will be strongly reinforced.

Successful *halal* compliance manufacturers such as Nestle and Ayamas should engage in giving more *halal* talks to the public and food operators and create more mentoring programs to serve the local community.

JAKIM may organize more repeat sessions of the *halal* documentary program on TV instead of airing it only once on Thursday night so that those who have missed out on Thursday night can catch up on another night.

JAKIM could include more educational and interesting news in different languages for public and operators to view. It could encourage more scholars to do research on how to improve *halal* standards and open share those results to public.

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Appendix A

The general requirement of MS 1500:2004

Najis

Najis according to *Syariah* law is:

1. things that are themselves not permissible such as pig and all its derivatives, blood and carrion;

2. *halal* food that is contaminated with things that are *non-halal*;

3. *halal* food that comes into direct contact with things that are *non-halal*;

4. any liquid and objects discharged from the orifices of human beings or animals such as urine, excrement, blood, vomit, pus, sperm and ova of pigs and dogs except sperm and ova of other animals; and

5. carrion or *halal* animals that are not slaughtered according to *Shariah* law.

Sources of Halal Food and Drinks

All land animals are *halal* as food except the followings:

1. animals that are not slaughtered according to *Shariah* law;

2. pigs and dogs and their descendants;

3. animals with long pointed teeth or tusks which are used to kill prey such as tigers, bears, elephants, cats, monkeys, etc.;

4. birds with talons or predator;

5. pests such as rats, centipedes, scorpions and other similar animals;

6. animals that are forbidden to be killed in Islam such as bees , woodpeckers, etc.;

7. creatures that are considered repulsive such as lice, flies, etc.

All aquatic animals (those which live in water and cannot survive outside it, such as fish) are *halal* except those that are poisonous, intoxicating or hazardous to health. Animals that live both on land and water such as crocodiles, turtles and frogs are not

halal. However, the products from hazardous aquatic animals are *halal* when the toxin or poison has been eliminated during processing, as permitted by *Shariah* law.

All types of plants and plant products and their derivatives are *halal* except those that are poisonous, intoxicating or hazardous to health. However, the products from hazardous plants are *halal* when the toxin or poison has been eliminated during processing, as permitted by *Shariah* law. All types of mushroom and micro-organisms (i.e. bacteria, algae and fungi) and their by-products and/or derivatives and all natural minerals and chemicals, are *halal* except those that are poisonous, intoxicating or hazardous to health.

All natural minerals and chemicals are *halal* except those that are poisonous, intoxicating or hazardous to health. All kinds of drinks and beverages are *halal* except those that are poisonous, intoxicating or hazardous to health.

Food and drinks containing products and/or by-products of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) or ingredients made by the use of genetic material of animals that are *non-halal* by *Shariah* law are not *halal*.

Slaughtering

According to *Halal* Standard, the *halal* slaughter shall be physically separated from *non-halal* slaughter according to the following requirements:

1. slaughtering shall be performed only by a Muslim who is mentally sound, fully understands the fundamental rules and conditions related to the slaughter of animals in Islam and he shall not be in ihram;
2. the act of slaughtering shall be done with intention and the slaughter man is well aware of his action;
3. the purpose of slaughtering is only for Allah and not for other purposes;

4. the animal to be slaughtered has to be an animal that is *halal*;
5. the animal to be slaughtered shall be alive or deemed to be alive at the time of slaughter;
6. animals to be slaughtered shall be healthy and have been approved by the competent authority;
7. the phrase (In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful) has to be invoked immediately before slaughtering;
8. slaughtering lines, tools and utensils shall be dedicated for *halal* slaughter only;
9. slaughtering knife or blade shall be sharp;
10. slaughtering shall be done only once. The "sawing action" of the slaughtering is permitted as long as the slaughtering knife or blade is not lifted off the animal during the slaughtering;
11. bones, nails and teeth shall not be used as slaughtering tools;
12. the act of *halal* slaughter shall begin with an incision on the neck at some point just below the glottis (Adam's apple) and after the glottis for long necked animals;
13. the slaughter act shall sever the trachea, oesophagus and both the carotid arteries and jugular veins to hasten the bleeding and death of the animal. The bleeding shall be spontaneous and complete; and
14. a trained Muslim inspector shall be appointed and be responsible to check that the animals are properly slaughtered according to the *Shariah* law.

For poultry, scalding shall only be carried out on animals that are deemed dead as a result of *halal* slaughter. Stunning is not recommended. However if stunning is to be carried out, the

conditions specified shall be complied. Slaughter of poultry by mechanical knife shall be in accordance with the specified requirements.

Product processing, handling and distribution

All processed food is *halal* if it meets the following requirements:

1. the product or its ingredients do not contain any components or products of animals that are *non-halal* by *Shariah* law or products of animals that are not slaughtered according to *Shariah* law;
2. the product does not contain anything in any quantity that is decreed as *najis* by *Shariah* law;
3. the product or its ingredients are safe and not harmful;
4. the product is prepared, processed or manufactured using equipment and facilities that are free from contamination with *najis*; and
5. during its preparation, processing, packaging, storage or transportation, it shall be physically separated from any other food that does not meet the requirements specified earlier or any other things that are decreed as *najis* by *Shariah* law.

Devices, utensils, machines and processing aids

Devices, utensils, machines and processing aids used for processing *halal* food shall not be made of or contain any materials that are decreed as *najis* by *Shariah* law and shall be used only for *halal* food.

Product storage, display and servings

All *halal* food that are stored, displayed, sold or served shall be categorised and labelled halal and segregated at every stage so as to prevent them from being mixed or contaminated with things that are *non-halal*.

Hygiene, sanitation and food safety

Hygiene, sanitation and food safety are prerequisites in the preparation of *halal* food. It includes the various aspects of personal hygiene, clothing, equipment and the working premises for processing or manufacture of food.

Appendix B

Requirements for Product manufacturer

1. Every product manufacturer who is interested to apply has to submit an application and the company must handle, supervise and process *halal* product only.

2. The contents of raw material, processed product and additives must be *halal*. The items must be similar as per the list mentioned in the application form.

3. The surrounding area must be clean and not be contaminated . Cleaning schedules must be proper and systematic.

4. During the production process, tools and must be properly organised and the place must be kept safe.

5. No third party contract except for *halal* product only.

The location of *halal* product manufacturer must be 5 km away from:

- i. Sty
- ii. Sewerage centre

6. Packaging materials must not be made of substances which are considered as najis (filthy) by Islamic Laws and harmful to health;

7. Packaging process must be handled hygienically in a perfect sanitation condition.

8. Every packaging must be clearly printed for easy reading, long lasting and the following information must be included;

- i. Name and/or product brand (as per stated in the *Halal* Certification certificate)
- ii. Minimum content in matric.
- iii. Name and address of manufacturer and / or distributor and trade mark.

iv. List of ingredients.

v. Code number representing date and / or production batch number / expiry date; and

vi. Halal logo of JAKIM/ JAIN/ MAIN.

9. The equipment used must be free from anything which is considered as najis (filthy) by Islamic Laws, not harmful and not making any side effect to the product.

10. The factory area must be fenced or the company may have a control system which can avoid animals from entering the premise.

Requirements for food premise

The followings items must be given attention for inspection purpose

1. Suspicious source of ingredients such as raw materials, processed materials or additives must be proven by a halal certificate from a recognised Islamic Body 2.
2. Preparation and hanling of raw material and ingredients must meet halal standards, hygiene and safety as required.
3. Supply of chicken/duck or animals of the same kind must be sourced from a slaughter house which has *halal* Certification certificate from JAKIM/JAIN/MAIN
4. Sales of alcohol and of the same kind are prohibited.
5. Tools and appliances must be cleaned every time before and after they are being used. They can only be used for *halal* food cooking.
6. All tools and goods are arranged in a neat, clean and safe manner.
7. Every worker is encouraged to undergo Food serving and *halal* training
8. Safety and cleanliness measures must be complied with.

9. Storage of raw materials and finished product before or after the cooking must be maintained at satisfactory level in terms of cleanliness and safety.
10. There must be a separated storage for wet and dried raw materials and the raw materials must be properly arranged.
11. Transportation is used for *halal* product only.

Everything which is related to the food handling (goods, stove, tools, storage, packaging) must be for *halal* only.

Requirements for food outlet at hotel

The attentions for inspections are given to the following areas:

1. In general, it must be in accordance with item 8.4;
2. the inspection and certification process must be carried out in the hotel kitchen only.
3. the availability of two (2) full time muslim cook working in the kitchen.
4. all cutleries must be for *halal* only
5. Only *halal* products are prepared in the *halal* kitchen.
6. Any non *halal* or suspicious ingredients or raw material are not used for all kind of dishes like Western and Chinese food;
7. Kitchen for *halal* food is separated from the non-*halal* kitchen and they are not accessible to each other.
8. Same Staff are not allowed to enter both *halal* and non *halal* kitchen.
9. Wine and any item of the same kind are strictly prohibited in the *halal* kitchen.

Scope of inspection

The inspection process covers the following items:

1. documentation
2. processing, handling and product distribution
3. Tools, apparatus and machines
4. storage, display and product serving
5. cleanliness, sanitary and food safety
6. packaging and labeling; and
7. the overall aspects of the premise

For a hotel:

1. *Halal* logo/certificate must be displayed in the kitchen section or in *halal* section of a certified *halal* restaurant only. It is forbidden to display a *halal* logo/certificate at the cashier counter etc.
2. Not allowed to be printed on food and beverages menu.
3. *Halal* logo may be used for advertisement purpose and it must be placed appropriately.
4. The use of the logo is only allowed for products which have been officially certified as printed in the certificate issued by JAKIM / JAIN/MAIN
5. A company is allowed to print in any colour which is suitable for their product packaging as long it is within the specification of the original logo which has been issued.

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